

Members

Rep. Robert Bischoff, Chairperson
Rep. Kreg Battles
Rep. William Ruppel
Rep. Phyllis Pond
Sen. James Merritt, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. Phil Boots
Sen. Richard Young
Sen. James Lewis



STATE FAIR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Legislative Services Agency
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789
Tel: (317) 233-0696 Fax: (317) 232-2554

LSA Staff:

Susan Montgomery, Attorney for the Committee
Bernadette Bartlett, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee

Authority: IC 15-1-1.5-4

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 23, 2007
Meeting Time: 11:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: Board Room of the Administration Building, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 E. 38th Street,
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 3

Members Present: Rep. Robert Bischoff, Chairperson; Rep. William Ruppel; Rep. Phyllis Pond; Sen. Richard Young; Sen. James Lewis.

Members Absent: Rep. Kreg Battles; Sen. James Merritt, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Phil Boots.

Chairperson Bischoff called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m and the members of the committee were introduced. A motion was made, seconded, and approved by voice vote to change a sentence on the second page of the September 20, 2007 meeting's minutes. Rather than "The 39th Street Bridge, a joint project between the Fair and the City of Indianapolis, has been completed.", the minutes should reflect "The 39th Street Bridge, a joint project between the Fair and the City of Indianapolis, will be completed because the Indiana Department of Transportation has been approved for funding for the second phase of a Transportation Enhancement project".

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

1. Proposed Legislation for the 2008 Legislative Session

Representative Ruppel discussed legislation that he intends to introduce for the 2008 session that would authorize a date no earlier than August 20 for commencement of the fall semester of public schools. School attendance would have less conflict with the state fair, and there will not be the drive to start classes in late summer now that the ISTEP test has been moved to the spring. Even starting as late as Labor Day, allowing for various breaks, continuing school to Memorial Day gives a full 185 days for attendance. In response to a question from Senator Young, Representative Ruppel replied that all year schools would be provided an exception to this statute's language. Representative Ruppel also cautioned the Committee to remember that if legislation is proposed to repeal property taxes, that the revenues received from the state fair property tax should be substituted in another manner.

2. Old Business- Report of the 2007 Indiana State Fair and the Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage

Executive Director Cindy Hoye reported that profit from the 2007 Indiana State Fair was about \$300,000. Visitors to the Fair were down from what was budgeted. The 2008 Fair will celebrate the hardwood industry; future projects include building the covered bridge and moving the Barn to the north side of the Fairgrounds. In 2009, the dates of the Fair will be expanded to include the earlier weekend. Director Hoye pledged to work with the county fairs for which this schedule change would cause a conflict.

Director Hoye stated that there is a new Indiana State Fair Board president, Mark Merkel. His wife, Judi Merkel, was also the president of the Fair Board in earlier years.

Director Hoye spoke about the Future Farmers of America Convention that is occurring in Indianapolis at this moment. Six buildings of the Fairgrounds will be used for the convention and the livestock judging will take place at the Fairgrounds. Indianapolis is up for a bid to have this convention return for a span of years in the future.

With respect to future projects, the Pepsi Coliseum and the South Pavilion still need to be renovated. The Pepsi Coliseum has been inspected and there are interior life safety and Americans with Disabilities Act issues that need to be addressed, but the structure itself is structurally solid. The Pepsi Coliseum works well as a medium sized venue for events.

Director Hoye gave an update on the Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage as Justin Armstrong, Barn Director, was unable to attend the meeting as he was working on field trips for students. There have been different topics for the field trips planned for each week. The Barn has received very positive feedback on the programs. The Committee then viewed aerial maps regarding the prospective moving of The Barn to the north side of the Fairgrounds, due to occur about March, 2008.

A discussion ensued concerning security procedures at the Fairgrounds. Bomb threats were made to the venue starting in July and were taken seriously. The Head of Security at the Fairgrounds and the Indianapolis Metro Police Department worked together on the case, and during the Fair itself, the Indiana State Police had jurisdiction. Ultimately, it was discovered that the calls were being made surreptitiously from the Pendleton Correctional Facility. Management of the Fair is working on setting up a method to make electronic contact with the staff in order to warn of emergency situations, weather bulletins, etc.

Representative Pond raised a question about a concessionaire being required to purchase items wholesale through the Fair. Director Hoye stated that the Indiana State Department

of Health has concerns about the quality of foodstuffs sold at the Fair. Wholesale sales figures also help to determine the amount of profit percentages owed to the Fair by the concessionaires. The Fair staff's concern is that the customers are safe in every facet of their Fair visit.

Senator Young expressed his pleasure regarding the upgrades to the Fairgrounds over the years. He is concerned that younger citizens continue interest in agriculture and agribusiness. Representative Pond is excited about the opportunities to provide energy through biodiesel, ethanol, and solar means. Director Hoye stated that the Reynolds Machinery building that will be built at the Fairgrounds will have solar panels on the roof and may be able to provide its own energy.

Chairperson Bischoff thanked the members of the Committee for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.